

**2003 HSC Notes from
the Marking Centre
Retail Operations**

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2003 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE

RETAIL OPERATIONS

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Retail Operations. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, the Marking Guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Retail Operations.

Comments

In 2003, approximately 1410 candidates attempted the Retail Operations examination.

The multiple-choice and short answer questions were similar in structure and style to those in the specimen paper and in the 2001/2002 papers and they covered a broad range of outcomes from the Retail Operations syllabus.

The extended response questions provided an opportunity for candidates to apply their knowledge of a range of HSC topics studied.

Section I – Core

Part A – Multiple-choice Questions

Question	Correct Response
1	A
2	A
3	D
4	C
5	C
6	B
7	B
8	B

Question	Correct Response
9	D
10	A
11	D
12	C
13	D
14	C
15	D

Section II

General Comments

Overall, the candidates' responses indicated that the majority had a good and appropriate grasp of retail concepts. Candidates need to be aware that the answer space allocated is a guide to the length of the response required to score full marks.

Teachers should ensure that candidates thoroughly understand the meaning of the words in the 'Glossary of Key Words' document. There were a large number of candidates who relied on defining and describing where the question required a more elaborate response. Those candidates who understood the instructional words generally gained access to higher ranges of marks.

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners might ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course.

Specific Comments

Question 16

- (a) This question required candidates to identify and outline three functions of retail environments. Candidates needed to identify and outline three discrete functions of a retail environment (eg making a profit, providing employment) or functions within a retail environment (eg Buying, customer service).

Better responses included a clear outline of each function, indicating its main features (eg buying involves the selection of products relevant to customers' needs), or its purpose (eg provide excellent customer service to ensure customer loyalty and repeat business).

Poorer responses often identified functions but were unable to outline the features of these functions. These responses were often ambiguous and failed to clearly explain three discrete functions. Some poorer responses simply identified areas of a retail store (eg back dock).

- (b) This question required candidates to describe the three main methods of approaching customers providing appropriate examples for each of these methods of approach. Candidates were not required to identify these approaches using correct retail terminology.

Better responses provided the key features of each approach and provided an example of how a salesperson would respond when using each approach (eg merchandise approach is used when a customer shows interest in a particular product and a salesperson may respond with 'those jackets have been very popular this season').

Poorer responses simply named each method correctly, or gave three examples, or described one method of approaching a customer using a relevant example. Some candidates confused types of questioning techniques with approaches or outlined basic guidelines in handling a sale.

Generally the 'service approach' was not as clearly described as the greeting and merchandise approaches.

Question 17

This question required candidates to complete an invoice by performing a number of calculations including multiplications, additions, subtractions and percentages.

Better responses were able to calculate all six totals correctly.

Average responses typically miscalculated the GST component but were awarded marks for subsequent totals if they had been correctly calculated using an incorrect starting total (based on an incorrect GST component).

Poorer responses made several errors in calculation, usually on percentage totals, adding discounts to sale prices rather than subtracting and subtracting GST components rather than adding to sub totals.

Question 18

This question required candidates to describe four different security measures to prevent employee and vendor theft in a retail store. Most candidates were able to describe two or more valid security measures.

Better responses provided four distinct measures for reducing both employee theft (eg place check seals on merchandise bought by an employee) and vendor theft (eg check deliveries against the invoice).

Average responses generally provided two or three distinct security measures with a clear description of each or provided four distinct security measures with a poor description of how these would prevent employee and vendor theft.

Poorer responses repeated similar measures for employee and vendor theft or simply listed measures (eg security camera) or provided security measures related to customer theft instead of vendor theft.

Question 19

This question required candidates to demonstrate how retail employees can behave ethically and responsibly in the workplace. Ethical behaviour involved work duties such as eliminating discriminatory behaviour and awareness of the need for discretion, tact and confidentiality when discussing the business. Responsible behaviour included consistently applying these policies and procedures, as well as following OHS legislative requirements.

The better responses were able to clearly supply detailed examples of both ethical and responsible behaviour from the workplace.

Average responses presented examples of either ethical or responsible behaviour or limited examples of each.

Poorer responses showed a limited understanding of either ethical or responsible behaviour or were incapable of distinguishing between them. Some of these candidates also discussed expectations rather than behaviours.

Question 20

This question required candidates to provide an example of an ergonomic and a psychological hazard from the retail environment. Candidates were then required to identify an appropriate action to minimize each of the hazards identified.

Better responses correctly identified examples of both ergonomic and psychological hazards and clearly provided strategies which could be implemented to minimise the potential hazards.

Average responses could only identify either ergonomic or psychological hazards and provide an appropriate strategy for the hazard identified.

Poorer responses failed to correctly identify both hazards or could identify one of the hazards but were unable to provide an appropriate strategy to minimise this hazard. Many of the weaker responses identified physical hazards as an example, confusing them with both ergonomic and psychological hazards.

Question 21

- (a) This question required candidates to apply their knowledge of retail selling to outline the signals a customer may use to indicate that he/she is ready to buy a product.

Better responses were able to provide a range of buying signals shown by customers such as producing a wallet/purse, taking the product to the point of sale area or asking a salesperson 'where do I pay for this item?' They were also able to incorporate an adequate description of how these signals should be interpreted as buying signals by the professional salesperson.

Average responses only identified a buying signal without providing an outline of how these signals should be interpreted as buying signals by the professional salesperson.

Poorer responses were not able to outline any appropriate buying signals displayed by a customer. These responses provided generic customer service signals which were not linked to the signals displayed by a customer when ready to purchase a product.

- (b) This question required candidates to identify and explain why a specific closing technique may be used by a professional salesperson to close a sale. A number of candidates were unable to interpret the intention of this question and provided generic responses as to how a salesperson could close a retail store at the end of trading for the day.

Better responses clearly identified and explained a specific closing technique using correct retail terminology. Responses such as assumptive close, final chance, special offer, and narrow down were commonly identified and specific explanations as to the use of such techniques were provided.

Average responses clearly identified a closing technique using correct retail terminology but were only able to provide a limited explanation as to why that specific technique was used.

Poorer responses either identified a closing technique without any explanation as to why that particular closing technique should be used or provided a simple narrative response using non-retail specific terminology. A number of poorer responses misunderstood the intention of the question and provided an explanation of how to close a store or to farewell a customer.

Question 22

- (a) This question required candidates to outline the effects of good or poor housekeeping procedures in the point of sale area. Most candidates outlined the positive effects of good housekeeping (eg improved sales).

Better responses clearly outlined the importance of housekeeping in the point of sale area.

Poorer responses were unable to outline more than one distinct reason why housekeeping is important.

- (b) This question required candidates to demonstrate a clear understanding of the common standards and differences in the behaviour and presentation of salespeople in a hardware and an exclusive menswear store.

Better responses included both similarities and differences between salespeople in both retail environments in relation to both their behaviour and presentation.

Poorer responses identified some similarities or differences between the retail environments but displayed a limited knowledge of common standards of behaviour or presentation in the retail environment.

Many students were unable to give details about common standards but were able to relate knowledge about the differences between the two retail environments.

Section III

Candidates need to be mindful of the rubric at the beginning of Section III advising them of the criteria used to assess responses.

Question 23

Candidates attempting this question were required to provide an evaluation of payment options available from a retailers' perspective. The majority of candidates used a range of payment options, highlighting their respective advantages and disadvantages from a retailers' point of view. The range of payment options evaluated included: cash, credit cards, debit cards, EFTPOS, lay-by, gift vouchers, credit notes, store accounts, barter card, travellers cheques and smart cards.

Better responses identified and described a comprehensive range of payment options and effectively evaluated each one. Many of these candidates were also able to make a judgement on whether certain payment options were of value to the retailer or not.

Average responses either identified a comprehensive range of payment options with a limited evaluation of these payment options from the retailer's point of view, or identified a limited range of payment options from the retailer's point of view providing a detailed evaluation of each.

Poorer responses concentrated on only one payment option or gave a general evaluation of payment options as a whole.

Question 24

This question required candidates to describe the responsibilities of retail employers to manage risks under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (2000). While most of the candidates answered the question from the employers' point of view, a number of candidates discussed their answer from the employees' viewpoint.

Candidates generally described the employers' responsibilities with the risk management process including identification, assessment and control of risks. They also included some description of the safety of others such as customers and tradesmen.

Better responses clearly described the establishment and duties of the OHS committee as well as the need for employers to provide appropriate training in the use of equipment, manual handling techniques and general safety within the work environment.

Average responses were able to outline a number of the responsibilities of employers under the OHS Act (2000) in terms of risk reduction but were unable to provide a description of the need for training in the workplace. Responses also contained some descriptive rather than retail specific terminology.

Poorer responses simply listed some relevant points relating to the OHS legislation but were unable to provide a description of these points. These candidates also focussed on the risks that were present rather than the employer's management of them. These responses generally consisted of limited, appropriate retail terminology.

Question 25

Candidates attempting question 25 were required to provide an explanation of how effective stock control procedures can increase a store's profit. It must be noted that a sizable percentage of the candidates attempting this question displayed a lack of understanding of the term explained. Rather than relating a cause and effect scenario with regards to the implementation of stock control procedures and their impact on store profits, many candidates simply provided a description of some stock control procedures without providing the impact of such procedures on a store's profit.

Candidates generally provided the explanation of stock control identifying the various procedures stores utilise such as stocktaking (full, cyclical, spotcheck), stock rotation (LIFO, FIFO), receipt of stock, despatch of stock, storage of stock, ordering/reordering of stock, housekeeping, store layout (merchandising), record keeping/documentation and pricing (markup/margin).

Better responses identified a range of relevant stock control procedures from those listed above and provided a comprehensive explanation of the effectiveness of using those particular stock control procedures in assisting to increase the profits of a store. Many candidates were also able to identify how stock control procedures, if not effectively implemented, could result in a negative impact on store profits through increased waste, theft (internal/external/vendor) and shrinkage (damaged/soiled stock).

Average responses were able to identify some stock control procedures but were only able to provide a limited explanation of these procedures and their effectiveness in increasing the profits of a store.

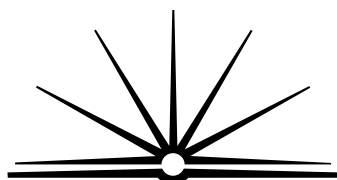
Poorer responses simply listed some relevant points relating to stock control procedures but were unable to provide a description of these procedures or the effectiveness of these procedures in increasing store profits.

Retail Operations

2003 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Unit of competency	
Section I			
1	1	WRRS.1A WRRCS.1A	Sell products & services Communicate in the workplace
2	1	RET001	Introduction to Retailing
3	1	WRRLP.2A	Minimise theft
4	1	WRR1.1A	Perform stock control procedures
5	1	WRRCS.1A WRR1.1A	Communicate in the workplace Perform stock control procedures
6	1	WRRS.1A	Sell products & services
7	1	WRRF.1A	Balance the register/terminal
8	1	WRRCS.2A	Apply point of sale handling procedures
9	1	WRRF.1A	Balance the register/terminal
10	1	WRRER.1A	Work effectively in a retail environment
11	1	WRRCS.3A	Interact with customers
12	1	WRRLP.1A	Apply safe work practices
13	1	WRRS.1A	Sell products & services
14	1	WRRM.2A	Perform routine housekeeping activities
15	1	WRRCS.2A WRRLP.2A	Apply point of sale handling procedures Minimise theft
Section II			
16 (a)	3	RET.001 WRRCS.3A	Introduction to retail Interact with customers
16 (b)	3	WRRCS.3A	Interact with customers
17	6	WRRCS.1A WRRF.1A WRRCA.1A	Communicate in the workplace Balance the register/terminal Operate retail equipment
18	4	WRRLP.2A WRRCS.2A WRR1.1A	Minimise theft Apply point of sale handling procedures Perform stock control procedures
19	4	WRRER.1A WRRCS.1A	Work effectively in a retail environment Communicate in the retail workplace

Question	Marks	Unit of competency	
20	4	WRRLP.1A WRR1.1A WRRM.2A	Apply safe work practices Perform stock control procedures Perform routine housekeeping activities
21 (a)	2	WRRS.1A WRRCS.3A	Sell products and services Interact with customers
21 (b)	3	WRRS.1A WRRCS.3A	Sell products and services Interact with customers
22 (a)	2	WRRM.2A WRRCS.1A WRRCA.1A	Perform routine housekeeping activities Communicate in the workplace Operate retail equipment
22 (b)	4	WRRM.2A WRRCS.1A WRRCS.3A	Perform routine housekeeping activities Communicate in the workplace Interact with customers
Section III			
23	15	WRRCS.2A WRRF1A	Apply point of sale handling procedures Balance the register/terminal
24	15	WRRLP.1A	Apply safe work practices
25	15	WRR1.1A	Perform stock control procedures



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2003 HSC Retail Operations Marking Guidelines

Question 16 (a)

Competencies assessed: Introduction to Retail 001, WRRCS.3A

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly identifies three functions of a retail environment and provides a clear outline for each function identified	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly identifies two functions of a retail environment and provides a clear outline for each function identified	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly identifies a function of a retail environment and provides a clear outline for the function identified	1
OR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies three functions with no outline	

Question 16 (b)*Competencies assessed: WRRCS.3A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes the three main methods of approaching customers using appropriate examples of each	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes two methods of approaching customers using appropriate examples of each OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes the three main methods of approaching customers and identifies each correctly but provides no examples OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies the three main methods of approaching customers and provides appropriate examples for each	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes one method of approaching customers using appropriate example OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies the methods of approaching customers, but gives no examples OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gives three examples of methods without describing any of the methods	1

Question 17*Competencies assessed: WRRCS.1A, WRRF.1A, WRRCA.1A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates six totals on the invoice	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates five totals on the invoice	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates four totals on the invoice	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates three totals on the invoice	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates two totals on the invoice	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly calculates one total on the invoice	1

**Question 18***Competencies assessed: WRRLP.2A, WRRCs.2A, WRRl.1A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes four different relevant types of theft prevention measures, two for employees and two for vendors	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes three different relevant theft prevention measures in a 2/1 combination employees/vendors or vendors/employees OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes two relevant theft prevention measures relating to employees and/or vendors and lists two other measures with no explanation	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes two relevant theft prevention measures relating to employees and/or vendors OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lists four different relevant types of theft prevention measures, two for employees and two for vendors with no explanation OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes one relevant theft prevention measure and lists two other relevant types of theft prevention measures	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes one relevant theft prevention measure relating to either employees or vendors OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lists two or three different relevant types of theft prevention measures with no explanations	1

Question 19
Competencies assessed: WRRC.S.1A, WRRER.1A
MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of ethical and responsible behaviour • Clearly supported by appropriate workplace examples that illustrate both types of behaviour 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of ethical and responsible behaviour • Supported by an appropriate workplace example that illustrates either type of behaviour 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of either ethical or responsible behaviour • Provides an appropriate workplace example for either type of behaviour 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited understanding of either ethical or responsible behaviour OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an appropriate workplace example with limited understanding of either type of behaviour 	1

Question 20
Competencies assessed: WRRLP.1A, WRRM.2A, WRRI.1A
MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a relevant retail example for both ergonomic and psychological hazards • Identifies correct actions to minimise the hazard for each example identified 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a relevant retail example for both ergonomic and psychological hazards • Identifies a correct action to minimise one of the hazards provided 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a relevant retail example of either an ergonomic/psychological hazard • Identifies a correct action to minimise the hazard identified OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly provides a relevant retail example of both an ergonomic/psychological hazard but provides no corrective actions for either example 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides one relevant retail example of either a ergonomic/psychological hazard but provides no corrective action • OR • Provides a generalised statement for BOTH ergonomic/psychological hazards without relating them to a specific retail example 	1

Question 21 (a)*Competencies assessed: WRRS1.A, WRRCS.3A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
• Outlines a range of buying signals shown by customers	2
• Outlines a buying signal shown by a customer	1

Question 21 (b)*Competencies assessed: WRRS1.A, WRRCS.3A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
• Using correct retail terminology identifies and explains why a specific closing technique is used	3
• Using correct retail terminology identifies and provides a limited explanation why a specific closing technique is used	2
• Identifies a closing technique with no explanation OR • Provides a closing technique with incorrect explanation OR • Provides a simple narrative response as an example of a closing technique OR • Provides an explanation of a closing technique using non-retail specific terminology	1

Question 22 (a)*Competencies assessed: WRRCA.1A, WRRM.2A, WRRCS.1A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
• Clearly outlines the positive effects of good housekeeping procedures at the point of sale area OR • Clearly outlines the negative effects of poor housekeeping procedures at the point of sale area	2
• Gives an example of either a positive or negative effect of housekeeping at the point-of-sale	1

Question 22 (b)*Competencies assessed: WRRCS.3A, WRRM.2A, WRRCS.1A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates a detailed understanding of common standards of professionalism in personal presentation and behaviour across the retail industry• Differentiates personal presentation and behaviour standards in terms of different retail outlets and target markets	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates an understanding of common standards of professionalism in personal presentation and behaviour across the retail industry• Differentiates personal presentation and behaviour standards in terms of either different retail outlets or target markets	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relates knowledge of behaviour and/or personal presentation standards for hardware employees and exclusive menswear employees, giving appropriate examples	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates limited knowledge of personal presentation or behaviour standards in the retail industry	1

Question 23
Competencies assessed: WRRF.1A, WRRCS.2A
MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a description of a comprehensive range of payment options available • Provides a comprehensive evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the payment options for retailers • Communicates ideas and information effectively, using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct industry terminology into a well reasoned, cohesive response, using language appropriate to the audience and purpose 	13–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a description of a range of payment options available • Provides an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the payment options for retailers • Communicates ideas and information, using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct industry terminology into a response, using language appropriate to the audience and purpose 	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a description of some payment options available • Provides a limited evaluation of some advantages and disadvantages of the payment options for retailers • Communicates ideas and information, using appropriate retail examples and a range of industry terminology in response <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a comprehensive range of payment options and a comprehensive description for each, from a retailer’s perspective • Simply lists advantages/disadvantages for the retailer with no evaluation <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a comprehensive range of payment options available and evaluates advantages and disadvantages of these payment options from a customer’s perspective 	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists some payment options available • Describes some advantages or disadvantages of the payment options for retailers • Communicates ideas and information with limited use of industry terminology <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an evaluation of a range of payment options available from the customer’s perspective 	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists some payment options available • Describes an advantage or disadvantage of payment options for the retailer • Shows limited communication, using some basic retail terminology 	1–3

Question 24
Competencies assessed: WRRLP.1A
MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a comprehensive description of the responsibilities of employers under the OH&S Act (2000) in terms of risk reduction • Communicates ideas and information effectively, using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct industry terminology into a well reasoned, cohesive response 	13–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a description of the responsibilities of employers under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction • Communicates ideas and information effectively, using appropriate retail examples and integrating industry terminology into a response 	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the responsibilities of employers under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction • Communicates ideas and information, using appropriate retail examples and a range of industry terminology in a response <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a comprehensive description of the responsibilities of employees under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction 	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the responsibilities of employers under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction • Communicates ideas and information with limited use of industry terminology in a response <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a description of the responsibilities of employees under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction 	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists some relevant points to the OH&S legislation • Shows limited communication, using some basic retail terminology <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the responsibilities of employees under the OH&S legislation in terms of risk reduction 	1–3

Question 25*Competencies assessed: WRRI.1A***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a comprehensive explanation of the impacts of stock control procedures on retailers profit• Communicates ideas and information effectively, using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct industry terminology into a well reasoned, cohesive response	13–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an explanation of the impacts of stock control procedures on retailers profit• Communicates ideas and information, using appropriate retail examples and integrating correct industry terminology in a response	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explains some impacts of stock control procedures on retailers profit• Communicates ideas and information, using appropriate retail examples and a range of industry terminology in a response	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes the impact of stock control procedures on retailers profit• Communicates ideas and information with limited use of industry terminology in a response	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lists some relevant points relating to stock control• Shows limited communication, using some basic retail terminology	1–3